

Comments from *JABA* Readers

AN EARLY STATEMENT ON INPATIENT BEHAVIORAL TREATMENT

BRUCE A. THYER

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Amid the *Sturm und Drang* of controversy pertaining to the etiology of severe disorders of behavior and of their proper treatment, it is refreshing to come across a sensible quote such as the one below. Apparently the idea that behavioral problems require behavioral solutions is an old one—not currently popular, but definitely with a historical precedent!

The recognition of the existence of mental disorder necessitating care in a state hospital does not have the same significance as the diagnosis of bodily disease requiring treatment in an ordinary hospital. Disease may, it is true, be present, but the principal fact is disorder in behavior, and in the majority of cases no evidence of disease can be detected. The hospital for the insane must, therefore, be organized primarily with the object of treating behavior, the ordinary practice of medicine being,

though essential, a less important branch of its activities. Only when this is fully grasped and adequately provided for, shall we be able to achieve even an approximation to the ideal hospital for mental disorders. Behavior is in part the result of inherited nerve connections, but to a much greater degree it is the outcome of education and training. A state hospital must, therefore, be planned primarily as an educational institution, its efforts being directed towards the correction of faulty habits and the establishment of new ones designed to enable the individual to behave in a manner compatible with social life. (Singer, 1919, pp. 551–552)

REFERENCE

- Singer, H. D. (1919). The organization of a state hospital. In National Conference of Social Work (Ed.), *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work* (pp. 551–557). Chicago: Rogers & Hall.

Correspondence may be addressed to B. A. Thyer, School of Social Work, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602 (E-mail: BThyer@uga.cc.uga.edu).

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